Littleville commended by Dept. of Education

Huntington – Elementary Principal Megan Coburn and Assistant Principal Sara Luciani were joined by Littleville teachers Rachel Millin, Kristina Schultz and Anne Fisk, while the school was honored at the Massachusetts State House on February 1.

Littleville Elementary School was commended for moving from a Level 3 school to a Level 1 (highest) school, due to student performance on the state’s PARCC testing between 2015 and 2016.

The ceremony included a welcome from Commission Chester Mitchell and comments from Secretary of Education Jim Peyser, where he noted that Massachusetts students were among the highest performing in the country and in the world.

“Everyone at Littleville Elementary School has contributed to this,” noted Coburn, after awards were handed out. Coburn added that she met with classroom teachers when the 2016 results were announced, to try to define which of the initiatives they had undertaken had led to this success. After a review of the data, she concluded that they did not have evidence pointing to just one or two things. She also found that the improvement was in all students, including subgroups of students (such as low income, special education, etc.).

Coburn acknowledged that most schools were expected to take a drop in scores with the switch to PARCC testing in 2015. “In the first year, we did take a bit of a hit. But last spring, our students were used to it and we understood what was expected of them and were better able to help them prepare.”

“We have a wonderful staff that is always willing to learn new instructional strategies, implement a new program, or find creative ways to engage our students and get them excited about learning. The past four years we have really focused on improving how we teach our students,” Coburn said, adding “Because our district is so rich in technology, our students are used to taking assessments online. All of our local assessments are now done online. It doesn’t phase them to do a test like PARCC online.”

The Gateway Regional School District has a 1 to 1 technology model that issues a free Chromebook to all students in grades 2 – 9. Parents have the option of purchasing insurance for the device if it becomes damaged (and insurance is required for older students to bring the devices home). Each Chromebook stays with the same student over several years, giving students an incentive to take good care of it.

A photo of the award was posted on social media, drawing immediate response from parents.
“I am so happy for the staff. It is always nice to get recognized for a job well done,” wrote parent Aimee Burnham-Renauld. “We couldn’t be happier with our experience at Littleville. Everyone is truly awesome!”

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Photo (left to right): Assistant Principal Sara Luciani, Principal Megan Coburn, Littleville teachers Rachel Millin, Kristina Schultz and Anne Fisk, with Secretary of Education Jim Peyser (back row) and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito (far right) as Littleville Elementary School was named a Commended School at the State House on February 1.